

A SURVEY OF RESIDENTS ATTITUDES ABOUT PARKS AND RECREATION IN THE CITY OF HURST

2004 Parks and Recreational Attitudinal Survey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Raymond Turco & Associates conducted the city's 2004 Recreation Needs Assessment and Attitude Survey, a component of city's parks and recreation master plan update. This public opinion poll captured attitudes on parks and recreational issues in the community from respondents randomly selected from phone-matched households. The full sample of 400 respondents was interviewed with a comprehensive questionnaire that collected attitudinal data on a variety of recreational issues including quality ratings of facilities, need for construction of additional amenities and satisfaction with recreational characteristics.

The telephone survey included the responses of 400 individuals. Below are listed the highlights from an analysis of the survey:

Parks and Recreation: Utilization and Opinions

- More than nine of ten residents (96%) are satisfied (45%) or very satisfied (51%) with the quality of parks and recreation in Hurst, while just one percent was dissatisfied (1%) or very dissatisfied (0%). The remaining 3% had no opinion. The ratio of satisfied to dissatisfied respondents was 96 to one. An indication of how residents felt about parks was that very satisfied comments were 51% and very dissatisfied, 0%. Residents who utilized city facilities were more passionate (very satisfied) about quality than nonusers.
- Respondents were most satisfied with the recreational services provided by Hurst for the following age groups: young children, under age 6 (67%-1%, 67.0:1) and ages 6-12 (65%-2%, 32.5), and adults, ages 46-65 (69%-3%, 23.0:1). People were least positive about the services provided for children, ages 13-18 (54%-5%, 10.8:1) and adults over the age of 65 (55%-5%, 11.0:1). A significant portion of survey participants, between 22% and 41%, had no opinion about the recreational services provided any one of the six age groups. Parents were most satisfied with services provided for children and adults under age 45. Non-parents were most satisfied with services provided for older adults.
- Pool/water park/natatorium (19%), recreation center/gym (19%), and multi-use trails/bike park (19%) were most frequently mentioned by survey participants as recreational facilities lacking. Only 159 of 400 possible respondents (40%) were able to offer a response, indicating a lack of an overriding facility need since over half of the sample could not offer a suggestion. Residents in Areas I and II (39%-24%-6%-9%) desired the

pool/water park/natatorium, while the recreation center/gym was the facility of choice in Areas III and IV (6%-7%-26%-40%). Multi-use trails were indicated throughout the city (16%-22%-16%-21%). Eleven other facility-types were mentioned by six percent or less.

- Senior/disable activities (14%), swimming-related/competitive swimming (9%), and arts/crafts/music and entertainment-related (both 8%) were similarly mentioned most often as the one activity or program respondents would like to see offered by Hurst's Parks and Recreation Department. Sixty-eight percent of the sample chose not to respond to this question, as only 129 respondents were able to suggest a program they would like to see offered.
- Visiting or using a municipal park or park facility (83%), visiting the city recreation center (66%), visiting a city playground (63%), and visiting the city aquatic center and a city park pavilion (both 50%) were the most popular recreational facilities or activities utilized by area residents in the past 12 months. Other activities drew participation rates from less than half the sample, with the lowest ratings voiced for participating in an adult athletic league (8%), utilizing a municipal facility for a meeting (14%), and using a municipal tennis court (15%).
- The maintenance of city athletic facilities (79%-5%, 15.8:1), the overall safety of the aquatic center (76%-5%, 15.2:1), the overall quality of the recreation center (84%-6%, 14.0:1), the overall quality of city athletic fields (80%-6%, 13.3:1), the overall quality of city parks (90%-8%, 11.3:1), and the maintenance of city parks (90%-8%, 11.3:1) received more than ten times as many positive ratings (excellent or good) as negative marks (fair or poor) and were rated the highest of 25 park and recreation facility characteristics tested. Overall, 17 of 25 aspects received at least five times as many positive than negative ratings as evidenced by the quality ratios. And no characteristic was rated more negatively than positive. Only two aspects received similar positive to negative marks, making them the lowest rated items evaluated – number of hike and bike trails in the city (37%-33%, 1.1:1) and having hike and bike trails conveniently located for people in all areas (35%-33%, 1.1:1). Several statements generated high no opinion responses, indicating a lack of available information among respondents. Those items were overall safety of practice fields and overall quality of hike and bike trails (both 34%), overall quality of practice fields (33%), number of practice fields in the city, number of city tennis courts, and quality of tennis courts (each 32%), having practice fields conveniently located and having hike and bike trails conveniently located (both 31%), and number of hike and bike trails in the city (30%). Residents were most positive in their evaluation of the number of parks (44% excellent), quality of parks (41%), maintenance of parks (38%), quality of the recreation center (37%), and safety of parks (35%).

- More than four of five residents sampled rated the money paid versus the services provided for the Parks and Recreation Department either a great (41%) or good (44%) value, compared to just 14% who rated the trade-off either a fair (12%) or poor (2%) value. One percent had no opinion on the question, with the findings equal to a quality ratio of better than six to one. In addition, the ratio of great to poor value ratings was better than twenty to one. Residents who utilized city facilities such as a city park (88%-69%), a recreation center (89%-76%), or the aquatic center (93%-77%) were more positive about the trade-off than nonusers.
- Chisholm (62%) was the overwhelming park of preference for residents to have visited. Other popular parks included Central (24%), and Redbud and Hurst Community (both 11%). Conversely, the facilities least likely to be visited were Windmill, Hurst Civic Center, and Valentine (each 1%). Utilization of Chisholm Park varied from 87% in Area III to 44% in Area II. Geographic preferences in parks were noted for Central (34% in Area II, to 10% in Area IV), Redbud (19% in Area II, to 2% in Area IV), Hurst Community (25% in Area I, to 2% in Area III), and Echo Hills (52% in Area IV, to 0% in Area I).
- "I'm satisfied with the recreational facilities in Hurst" (91%-7%, 13.0:1) and "I have adequate avenues to voice my concerns about recreation in Hurst" (81%-11%, 7.4:1) were the attitudinal statements about parks and recreation that achieved the highest ratio of agreement to disagreement from residents. In addition, 75% of the full sample agreed that "the existing park system is adequate" (75%-20%, 3.8:1), 67% that "I am satisfied with the current landscaping in city medians and intersections" (67%-32%, 2.1:1), and 63% that "the city should improve the existing parks and not develop any new ones" (60%-34%, 1.8:1). The statement that had the lowest agreement related to paying additional taxes: "I am willing to pay additional city taxes to see the quality of parks upgraded" (53%-42%, 1.3:1). With the exception of 22% that strongly agreed with being satisfied with recreational facilities in Hurst, no statement attained an intensity rating of greater than 8%, indicating a lack of enthusiasm or commitment to any of the beliefs, although people in general were quite positive.
- Fewer than one in 20 (4%) said they visited the parks and recreation department web page on the city's web site either weekly (4%) or daily (0%). An additional 16% visited the web page on a monthly basis. In all, more than four of five (81%) said they had rarely or never visited the web page. Visitation to the city's web site of any amount (daily-weekly-monthly) was more prevalent in Area I (27%) than anywhere else (20%-14%-11%).
- Hurst Happenings/recreation brochures and Hurst Highlights/city newsletter (both 80%) were the top sources for where residents got information about recreational activities in Hurst. A majority of the sample also got information from word of mouth (53%). Sources less often utilized in Hurst included signs

(37%), *The Ft. Worth Star-Telegram* (34%), school brochures/flyers (29%), and the parks and recreation office (24%). Area I residents were more likely to get information about recreation from the listed sources than people elsewhere in the city.

Improving Parks and Recreation In Hurst

- Park restrooms (81%-15%, 5.4:1), jogging/biking trails (78%-18%, 4.3:1), picnic tables (73%-22%, 3.3:1), and natural habitat/nature areas (71%-24%, 3.0:1) were the facility construction items that earned the broadest consensus – judging from the ratio of important to unimportant ratings. Secondary items from the list of 30 facility-types rated important or very important to construct by residents included playgrounds (71%-25%, 2.9:1), rental picnic/reunion pavilions (65%-28%, 2.3:1), exercise stations along trails (61%-29%, 2.1:1), a natatorium (64%-29%, 2.1:1), recreation center (64%-32%, 2.0:1), and basketball courts (59%-29%, 2.0:1). At the other end of the attitude spectrum were five construction prospects that drew at least as many negative as positive replies: BMX bicycle course (45%-48%, 0.9:1), football fields (41%-45%, 0.9:1), indoor archery range (40%-51%, 0.8:1), adult softball fields (37%-49%, 0.8:1), and shuffleboard courts (38%-53%, 0.7:1). The items residents were most passionate (very important) about were park restrooms (31%), jogging/biking trails (22%), a natatorium (22%), and natural habitat/nature area (19%).
- A natatorium and jogging/biking trails were considered the most important recreational facilities to construct out of the 30 facility-types presented, with each receiving identical 14% selection percentages. Filling out the top six were a recreation center (9%), park restrooms (7%), and dog park and playgrounds (both 6%). Comparatively, mentioned least often by residents were adult softball fields (one person), and horseshoe pits, exercise stations along trails, meeting space and BMX bicycle course (each two persons). The recreational diversity of the community was reinforced as 29 of 30 items were listed as most important by at least one person. Rounding out the top ten were skateboard park (5%), and natural habitat/nature areas, baseball fields, and amphitheater (each 4%).
- “Improved landscaping of city streets will help to improve our city image” (84%-14%, 6.0:1) and “I support the city developing ‘gateways to the city’ so that people know they are coming into Hurst” (79%-17%, 4.6:1) each attained a higher agreement to disagreement ratio than “I am satisfied with how streets and intersections are landscaped in Hurst” (77%-21%, 3.7:1). Of the six beautification-related statements, the only item to be disputed was the negative comment, as 71% disagreed that “I do not believe that landscaping city streets and intersections is all that important,” although 27% did agree, which produced a ratio of 0.4:1. The remaining statements scored ratios of 1.8:1 (62%-35% for “I believe the city should plant more trees and landscaping along streets and intersections”) and 1.5:1 (54%-37% for “I would like to see more public art in Hurst.” These findings indicate that

although they believe improved landscaping will improve image, there is general satisfaction with the current situation. The top four statements drew strong agreement ratings from 16% to 13%, with no statement set apart from others.

- A recreation center (84%-14%, 6.0:1), public restrooms (80%-18%, 4.4:1), and a natatorium (60%-38%, 1.6:1) were the top three facilities, out of seven tested, in which respondents voiced the highest likelihood of utilization if available in Hurst. What were not as likely to be utilized was a skateboard park (23%-75%, 0.3:1), a BMX park (23%-75%, 0.3:1), additional meeting space (34%-63%, 0.5:1), and a dog park (44%-55%, 0.8:1). Residents were most passionate (very likely) when it came to discussing public restrooms and a recreation center (both 25%) as well as a dog park and a natatorium (both 19%).
- Renovate and redevelop neighborhood parks (86%-12%, 7.2:1), construction of restrooms in small neighborhood parks (84%-13%, 6.5:1), and expand the city's trail system (77%-19%, 4.3:1) were the top three capital park and recreation improvements supported by residents, out of eight possible projects. Each item was more often supported than opposed, with the least support voiced for expanding community meeting space (48%-43%, 1.1:1), construction of a skateboard park in the city (50%-46%, 1.1:1), and construction of a dog park (54%-42%, 1.3:1). Support was twice the level of opposition for constructing an additional recreation center (68%-27%, 2.5:1) as well as a natatorium (66%-31%, 2.1:1). Residents were most enthusiastic about renovating and redeveloping neighborhood parks (24% strong support), construction of restrooms (23%), an additional recreation center (21%), and expanding the city's trail system (20%).